

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-15 and 18-27 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 1, 7, 11, and 15 and cancels claims 2, 16 and 17 without introducing any new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 5, 7, 9-11, 13, 14 and 23-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Lockhart (U.S. Pat. No. 4,521,749); Claims 15 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Hess et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,170,413, herein "Hess"); and Claims 2-4, 6, 8, 12, 16, and 17 are objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim; and Claims 18-22 and 27 are allowed.

Initially, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the early indication of the allowable subject matter in Claims 2-4, 6, 8, 12 and 16-22 and 27.

In response to the rejection of Claims 1, 5, 7, 9-11, 13, 14 and 23-25, allowable Claim 2 has been cancelled and the allowable subject matter therein has been incorporated into independent Claims 1, 7 and 11. Further, in response to the rejection of Claims 15 and 26, Claims 16 and 17 have been cancelled and the subject matter within has been incorporated into Claim 15.

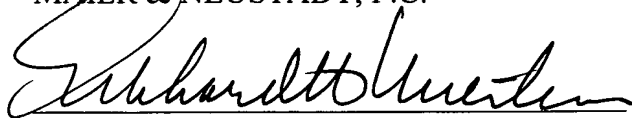
Thus independent Claims 1, 7, 11 and 15 have been amended to include allowable subject matter as indicated in the outstanding Office Action as patentable distinguishing over Lockhart and Hess.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 7, 11 and 15 in their present condition are allowable.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eckhard H. Kuesters', written over a horizontal line.

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